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Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Advancement of women

The critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.16/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 47th meeting, on 6 November 2000, the Third Committee adopted, without a vote, draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.16/Rev.1. A statement of programme budget implications was before the Committee (A/C.3/55/L.33).

2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide, in view of the difficult financial situation of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), to provide it with financial assistance on a non-recurrent basis, in a fashion to be determined, in order to enable it to continue its activities throughout 2001.

3. In the statement of programme budget implications, the Third Committee was informed that if the General Assembly decided, in view of the difficult financial situation of the Institute, to provide it with financial assistance on a non-recurrent basis in order to enable it to continue its activities throughout 2001, the Assembly could do so only through the regular budget. Given the non-reimbursable basis of the proposed financial assistance, it would be understood that the provision of regular budget funds to the Institute would constitute a one-time exception to the provisions of article VI, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Institute, as amended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2000/24 of 28 July 2000 to read as follows:

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"The activities of the Institute shall be funded by voluntary contributions from States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, foundations, including the United Nations Foundation, private sources and other sources in accordance with article VII of the statute".

4. The Third Committee was also informed in the statement of programme budget implications that, as to the manner in which this assistance would be provided, it was the intention of the Secretary-General to bring this question, as well as the status of the financial situation of the Institute, to the attention of the Fifth Committee. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of INSTRAW (A/55/385), in spite of all the efforts deployed and the repeated urgent appeals to Governments, the level of contributions to the INSTRAW Trust Fund has continued to decrease markedly, and there are no indications that the situation will improve. In 1992 contributions to the INSTRAW Fund amounted to over $1.9 million. Since then there has been a steady decline. The level of contributions for 1999 was $602,150 and, so far in 2000, contributions received total $388,489 and unpaid pledges stand at $144,950. In his report, the Secretary-General pointed out that in the absence of significant additional contributions, the Institute would run out of funds in the early part of 2001 and would be closed.

5. Taking into account expenditure trends so far in 2000 and assuming that of the amount of outstanding pledges $140,000 will be collected, the balance of resources expected to be available to INSTRAW as at January 2001 would amount to some $350,000, excluding a reserve of $200,000, which has been set aside to cover final expenditures and liabilities in the event that the Institute has to be closed down. Based on pledges for 2001 and taking into account the historical pattern of contributions made without a prior pledge, it is estimated that some $90,000 would be received in 2001. With regard to the Institute's requirements for 2001, the budget has not yet been formulated or reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Based on prior years' expenditures and expenditures so far this year, and taking into account the fact that the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW recommended the introduction of the Gender Awareness Information and Networking System (GAINS), to which the highest priority should be given by deferring all other programmes and activities, it is expected that the requirements of the Institute would be around $1,300,000 in 2001. The shortfall, based on the assumption outlined above, would amount to some $860,000, as follows:

Estimated balance available 1 January 2001:	$350,000
Estimated contributions in 2001 based on pledges made and historical pattern of contributions:	$90,000
Total available:	$440,000
Anticipated requirements in 2001:	$1,300,000
Shortfall:	$860,000

6. The estimates provided above are based on the best assumptions that can be made at this point in time. A number of these assumptions may turn out to be different. Given the level of uncertainty (usually inherent in respect of activities funded from voluntary contributions), the General Assembly may wish to set the level of financial assistance to be provided to the Institute, on a non-recurrent basis, at $800,000.

7. It is not anticipated that this amount could be absorbed within the existing provisions of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Consequently, it would constitute a charge against the contingency fund.

8. Should the Fifth Committee decide to provide the Institute with financial assistance in the amount of $800,000, it should inform the General Assembly that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.16/Rev.1 would give rise to additional requirements of $800,000 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, on the understanding that the provision of regular budget funds to the Institute would constitute a one-time exception to the provisions of article VI, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Institute.